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TABLE 1. CASE ANALYSIS OF HOMICIDES OCCURRING FROM 1938 TO 1965
(AS RECALLED FROM MEMORY BY THREE INFORMANTS)*

CASE No.	DATE	AGE	WEAPON	WOUNDS	PLACE	TIME	SUSPECTS	MOTIVE	OUTCOME
1	1938—fiesta in neighboring town	50	pistol, machete	head cut off	in backyard of borrowed house in neighboring town	afternoon	?	Accused of witchcraft	No one apprehended.
2	1945	65	pistol	shot between eyes	in street	night	two drinking companions (relatives of victim)	Drunken quarrel	Two companions went to jail. While in jail, with help of witch from neighboring town, set fire to four houses in pueblo.
3	1946	48	machete (brothers disarmed him of shotgun)	?	road at outskirts of town, at cross	dawn (5 A.M.)	brothers: 1 older, 2 younger	Curer, suspected of being witch.	One brother went to jail for five years.
4	1948	65	machete	well chopped up	neighboring hamlet	?	?	"I don't know what crime he had. He was a curer."	No one went to jail.
5	1946—fiesta San Francisco	38	machete and gun	well cut up, head and neck	in woods	?	?	Accused of witchcraft.	No one complained.
6	1946	50	shotgun	?	in street	night, after curing ceremony, very drunk	?	Curer, accused of witchcraft.	Wife complained, but no witness.
7	1958	27	nail	in throat	in street	night, after curing ceremony	father of boy who died of witchcraft	Curer, accused of witchcraft.	Before dying, victim revealed name of killer, but local authorities would not arrest him. Case went to higher court, but no witnesses.
8	1960—11/28	60	machete	cut off head	in street	night, after curing ceremony	son-in-law	Accused of witchcraft by curer at ceremony for daughter.	Son-in-law fled town.
9	1960—12/18 fiesta, Sta. Lucia	28	knife, machete	heart, throat, stomach	?	?	killer paid by cattle owners	Stole cattle.	Accused killer on bail of 500 pesos paid by cattle owners.

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10	1960—12/18 fiesta, Sta. Lucia	60	shotgun	shot in back—bullet entered lung	houseyard, two feet from house	7 P.M., after curing ceremony	brother-in-law	Curer, accused of witchcraft.	No one apprehended
11	1961—6/16	70	machete	many wounds	near highway	9 P.M., after gathering of curers	neighbors	Curer, accused by other curers of being witch causing epidemic.	Neighbors were not identified.
12	1961	35	shotgun	shot in back	highway	?	leader of political independence movement (wife's brother)	Refused to pay tribute to independence leaders.	Killer's wife (victim's sister) left husband. No one jailed. Later, killer killed by victim's brother [case 18].
13	1961—7/26 fiesta in neighboring hamlet	30	?	?	street, near cantina	late at night	wife's brother	Very abusive, fought drunks.	Wife's brother fled town.
14	1961—10/24 fiesta in neighboring hamlet	45	knife	many wounds	?	?	neighbors	Accused of being witch by neighbors.	No one apprehended.
15	1961—12/15 fiesta, Sta. Lucia	37	gun	?	cantina	late at night	?	Accused of witchcraft.	Wife agreed he was witch.
16	1962—9/25	18	?	?	?	?	rival for girl	Fought over girl.	No one accused.
17	1962—9/25	20	knife	stabs	in street	night (1 A.M.)	cattle owners	Accused of stealing cattle.	Went to jail, but released on bail set up by cattle owners.
18	1962—9/26	35	gun	shot in heart	highway	(4 P.M.)	brother-in-law's brother	Revenge—victim had killed his own brother-in-law [case 12].	Killer declared he had killed. Paid fine and went free.
19	1962—11/15 fiesta, All Saints	20	knife, gun	stabbed in heart and shot	drinking in cantina	late at night	rival for girl	Fought over girl.	No one accused.
20	1962—12/24 fiesta, Christmas Eve	50	gun	shot between eyes	road outside town	dawn (6 A.M.)	leader of cattle association	Accused of stealing cattle.	?
21	1963—4/4	36	hatchet	head	in woods, given drink by killers	5 P.M.	?	Curer, accused of witchcraft.	No one apprehended. Brother did some investigating.
22	1963—7/24	45	?	?	in bed	night, after curing ceremony	Curer from neighboring town	Victim had accused suspect of being a witch when curing a patient.	Nothing.

* Two more homicides were recalled for 1964 than official records show. They most probably occurred in a previous year.

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TABLE 1 (*Cont.*)

Case No.	Date	Age	Weapon	Wounds	Place	Time	Suspects	Motive	Outcome
23	1963—8/28 fiesta, San Augustin	?	sandals	kicked to death	in cantina	afternoon	drinking companions	Barroom brawl	One of two assailants arrested, bailed out.
24	1963—9/25	70	shotgun	forehead	in field	late afternoon	sons of man whom he was accused of having killed by witchcraft	Accused by curers in neighboring towns of having caused sickness	Nothing.
25	1964—1/2 fiesta, New Years	50	machete, gun	?	street outside house of new president	night (11 P.M.)	killer paid by brothers	Accused of stealing cattle.	Brother fled, but was jailed when he returned.
26	1964—3/3 Carnival	54	gun, machete	chopped up with machete	street, one block from house	night (11 P.M.)	?	Accused of witchcraft by neighbors.	No one accused.
27	1964—5/14	90	gun	forehead	highway	afternoon	Ladino liquor distiller, not of community	Victim had denounced distiller to federal authorities.	No one accused.
28	1964—9/1	50	gun	?	milpa, after his brothers gave him drink	afternoon	his brothers	Accused of witchcraft.	One brother fled. The other was killed but claimed the first one did it.
29	1964—9/14	65	knives	many knife wounds	street, three blocks from house	late at night, after gathering of curers	curers	Curer, accused by other curers of being witch causing epidemic.	No one accused.
30	1964	22	?	?	eight meters from his house	night (1 A.M.)	close friend, hired by cattle owners, brothers of killer	Accused of stealing cattle.	Freed on bail.
31	1965—2/14	42	machete	head cut off	road to neighboring hamlet	night (3 A.M.)	?—at first thought it was wood spirit, until they found head	?	No one accused.
32	1965—2/22	43	knife, stone	stabbed in heart, head bashed	street near house	night	?	Accused of witchcraft by neighbors.	No one accused.
33	1965—3/21 Carnival	45	shotgun	?	street	night	?	Accused of witchcraft.	No one apprehended.

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34	1965 4/24	27	gun	?	found in woods, body dragged there from town	night (1 A.M.)	brother-in-law	He had relations with 14-year-old sister-in-law. When he tried reconciliation, became drunk, abusive.	No witness, no blood found in in-laws' house.
35	1965– 5/30 fiesta, just before San Francisco	35	shotgun	three shots entered back	road	afternoon	?	Stole cattle, corn.	Killers left note saying old man did it, but no one believed
36	1965– 8/15	42	machete	head severed, side wounds	road to milpa	6 P.M.	son by first marriage	Failed to help son get a wife; accused by dying wife of causing her death by witchcraft.	Widow spread rumors that it was his son, but refused to testify.
37	1965– 10/?	20	shotgun	back	in houseyard	6 P.M.	rival for girl	Accident—killer mistook him for his brother, who was challenging killer's suit for a girl.	?

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682 675 75 these suspicions and kill the witch. If he should kill the witch while the patient is still alive, it is believed that the patient will die.

682 685 674 [463] [697] Killing men for cattle theft (six cases) is a relatively recent occurrence. It has put homicide on the market: the associations of cattle-owners have hired killers in three of the six cases. In addition to the killer's fee, they pay the fine to release him from prison. Fines for homicide have increased in the past five years—from 1,000 to 3,000 pesos—but not sufficiently to price the murder of cattle thieves out of the market. A good bull is worth [435] 1,500 pesos, and the threat of further loss by theft seems to justify the expenditure of fees and fines. When the cattle-owners lose some of their herd, they go to spiritualists or to San Miguel, the talking saint of Ixtapa, to find out who did the stealing. Since such evidence does not hold up in court, legal settlement is not attempted. Legal action, moreover, would create an enemy who might seek revenge. A Ladino secretary of the town center who had lost a bull accused a man of stealing his cattle and demanded 500 pesos in compensation. By receiving the money he jeopardized his safety, and eventually he had to leave town.

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The Resolution of the Case

682 •69 It is nearly impossible to find witnesses to homicide. Of these 37 cases, 28 resulted in no action being taken by the authorities, and in five cases where the killers went to jail, they were released with the payment of minimal fines. In the calculations of the townspeople, it is hardly worth risking one's neck to get such a minimal revenge.

682 593 626 [683] However, this does not mean that homicide goes unnoticed in the community. After a killing the widow sings of the life of the dead man. If she is in agreement with the verdict arrived at by the killer and others, she will deny knowledge of what he has done, or even suggest that she too was aware of what harm he has caused (one widow implied that her husband, killed as a witch, was responsible for the death of four of her six children). If she objects to the verdict, she sings of what a good man he was and how blameless. She will then air her own suspicions in the following weeks as to who killed her husband.

682 683 627 Following the funeral, when the women have left the cemetary, the men sit at the grave. As they measure out a liter of liquor and pass it around, they advance hypotheses as